

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08
NSC-05 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04
SIL-01 L-03 H-01 PA-01 PRS-01 /096 W
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R 031925Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0651

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2633

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CS MX

SUBJECT: ODUBER STATE VISIT TO MEXICO

REF: MEXICO 2468

1. SUMMARY: COSTA RICA PRESIDENT DANIEL ODUBER QUIROS VISITED THE MEXICAN RESORT OF CANCUN FEB 23-26 WHERE HE MET WITH MEXICAN PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO, AND WITH STATE OFFICIALS, AND INSPECTED GOVERNMENT PROJECTS IN CHETUMAL, (AGRICULTURAL) CANCUN (TOURIST), AND MERIDA (TOURIST). A JOINT COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED (REFTEL) AND, ACCORDING TO THE MINISTER COUNSELOR OF THE COSTA RICAN EMBASSY, CARLOS

MORENO, A NEW SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BECAME EVIDENT AS A RESULT OF THE VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER COUNSELOR MORENO ALSO PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING DETAILS ON SPECIFIC ITEMS OF COOPERATION AGREED UPON:

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A. FERTICA-THE ISSUE REMAINS AS TO WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE FERTICA SHARES COSTA RICA AND THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES WILL BUY. COSTA RICA THINKS IT IS BETTER TO KEEP MEXICO AS PART OWNER FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND AS A SUPPLIER OF RAW MATERIAL. MEXICO HAS OFFERED TO SELL 50 PERCENT OF ITS SHARES AND HAS NEVER SAID IT WILL NOT SELL MORE THAN 50 PERCENT. ACCORDING TO MORENO, THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT MEXICO WILL ABSORB FERTICA'S DEFICIT OF THE PAST

YEAR AS PART OF THE FINAL SETTLEMENT. MORENO ADDED THAT ODUBER WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES GET MOVING ON THEIR PURCHASES OF FERTICA BEFORE HE FINISHES HIS TERM OF OFFICE NEXT YEAR.

B. THE \$5 MILLION CREDIT FOR IMPORTS OF MEXICAN CAPITAL GOODS IS ACTUALLY A RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUS LINE OF CREDIT WHICH WAS FELT TO BE TOO RESTRICTIVE SINCE IT WAS ONLY AVAILABLE TO THOSE COSTA RICANS IMPORTING MORE THAN \$100,000 WORTH OF GOODS. THE NEW CREDIT WILL ALLOW SMALLER TRANSACTIONS, AND IS OFFERED FOR 5 YEARS AT AN INTEREST RATE OF 6-7 PERCENT.

C. MEXICAN TECHNICIANS FROM INFOTUR (MEXICAN TOURIST OFFICE) WILL ARRIVE IN COSTA RICA NEXT WEEK TO MAKE PRELIMINARY STUDIES ON THE GUACAMAYA TOURIST COMPLEX.

D. ALTHOUGH REFERENCE WAS MADE TO MEXICAN INVESTMENT IN COSTA RICA, NO CONCRETE COMMITMENT WAS MADE IN THAT AREA.

E. A PROMISE TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND CONSULT REGULARLY ON A HIGH LEVEL IS VIEWED OPTIMISTICALLY BY MORENO WHO SAW LOPEZ PORTILLO AS MORE ORGANIZED AND DETERMINED THAN FORMER PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WHOSE ENTHUSIASM OFTEN GOT SIDETRACKED BEFORE ISSUES WERE RESOLVED.

F. MEXICO EXPRESSED STRONG INTEREST IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE SUCCESSES OF THE COSTA RICAN COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

3. IN PUBLIC COMMENTS JLP AND ODUBER EXHIBITED A WARM FRIENDSHIP AND BOTH SPOKE OFTEN OF THE NEED FOR "UNITY", "INTEGRATION", "A COMMON FRONT", TO FACE THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND PARTICULARLY FINANCIAL MATTERS. OF NOTE, WAS ODUBER'S STATEMENT ABOUT JLP: "LIC. LOPEZ PORTILLO, IN THE FEW WEEKS SINCE HIS INAUGURATION, HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT WE LATIN AMERICANS HAVE SOMEONE WHO WILL SPEAK OUT FOR US." ALTHOUGH JLP HUMBLY DENIED ANY LEADERSHIP DESIRES, ODUBER REITERATED IN A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE (REFTEL) THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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"MEXICO AND ITS PRESIDENT ARE GREAT LEADERS IN LATIN AMERICA-THAT NO ONE CAN ARGUE". THUS JLP WAS EASILY GIVEN THE ACCOLADE SOUGHT FOR SIX YEARS BY ECHEVERRIA.

4. THE ONLY SNAFU OF THE VISIT OCCURRED WHEN ODUBER'S PRESS SPOKESMAN, CARLOS MORO, TOLD NEWSMEN THAT SPAIN HAD ASKED COSTA RICA TO MEDIATE IN REESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH MEXICO. THE FOLLOWING DAY ODUBER CLARIFIED THAT COSTA RICA HAD NOT BEEN ASKED TO PLAY SUCH A ROLE, THAT SUCH MEDIATION WAS NOT NECESSARY.

5. THE DELEGATION ACCOMPANYING ODUBER INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO, ECONOMIC MINISTER SANCHEZ MENDEZ, FINANCE MINISTER PORFIRIO MORERA LATER CAME TO MEXICO CITY FOR TALKS WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS. UPON DEPARTING FOR COSTA RICA, FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO SPOKE TO THE PRESS HE REPORTEDLY STATED THAT "WE CANNOT EXPECT A JUST TREATMENT FROM THE US. WE HAVE TO LEARN FROM OUR EXPERIENCES. SOONER OR LATER THE LIBERATION OF THE PEOPLE WILL BECOME A REALITY." MORENO COULD NOT CONFIRM THAT FACIO HAD IN FACT USED SUCH STRONG WORDS, BUT WAS GOING TO POINT OUT THE PRESS REPORT TO FACIO NEXT WEEK TO CLARIFY

WHETHER THE FONMINISTER HAD BEEN MISQUOTED AS WE SUSPECT.

6. COMMENT: THE VISIT OF DANIEL ODUBER AS JLP'S FIRST STATE VISITOR COMPLEMENTED NICELY THE MEXICAN PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON BY ACCENTING JLP'S FOREIGN POLICY OF STRENGTHENING TIES WITH THE US AND LATIN AMERICA AS MEXICO'S "NATURAL ENVIRONMENT." IT IS ILLUSTRATIVE ALSO THAT JLP'S FIRST STATE VISITOR WAS A NEIGHBOR, A DEMOCRATIC LEADER, AND A MODERATE WITHIN THE LATIN AMERICAN POLITICAL SPECTRUM. FINALLY, THE PARALLELS BETWEEN THE TWO VISITS WERE NOTEWORTHY: BOTH PRESIDENTS WENT NORTH (JLP TO WASHINGTON AND ODUBER TO CANCUN) WITH FINANCIAL NEEDS, PARTICULARLY TO CORRECT TRADE IMBALANCES. BOTH VISITS RESULTED IN PROMISES OF A NEW "MECHANISM" OF HIGH LEVEL CONSULTATIONS. BOTH WERE CARRIED OUT IN AN UNUSUALLY WARM AND INFORMAL MANNER. BOTH VISITS SHOULD GIVE US A GOOD INDICATION OF MEXICO'S NEW "STYLE" IN FOREIGN POLICY.
THOMPSON

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